



PUBLIC NOTICE

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

445 12th STREET S.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20554

News media information 202/418-0500

Fax-On-Demand 202/418-2830

Internet: <http://www.fcc.gov>

<ftp.fcc.gov>

DA 07-1791

Released: April 20, 2007

**OFFICE OF ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY DECLARES TETHERS UNLIMITED, INC.
APPLICATION FOR LICENSE OF STATION WE2XAH IN THE EXPERIMENTAL RADIO
SERVICE TO BE A "PERMIT-BUT-DISCLOSE" PROCEEDING FOR *EX PARTE* PURPOSES**

On January 3, 2007, the Experimental Licensing Branch granted the application of Tethers Unlimited, Inc. (TUI) (File No. 0580-EX-PL-2006) for new Experimental Radio license for Station WE2XAH. This action provided for the "Multi-Application Survivable Tether" (MAST) to deploy three picosatellites to investigate tether survivability and dynamics in the space environment. The three picosatellites have been deployed into an 803.0 x 658.5km, 98° inclination orbit. Data from the experiment will be transmitted to earth using the 2401.2-2483.5 MHz band.

On April 16, 2007, Orbcomm Inc. filed a Petition to revoke this grant. Orbcomm alleges that the orbit proposed by TUI would place the experimental tethered satellite within the orbital envelope in which the current generation Orbcomm system operates and could pose an unacceptable collision hazard to Orbcomm's next generation constellation. Orbcomm asserts that TUI's application is deficient as it did not include analysis of known objects in the proposed operational orbit.

On April 18, 2007, Iridium Satellite LLC filed an informal request to suspend or revoke TUI's experimental license pending further investigation regarding the risk of TUI's satellite colliding with one or more of Iridium's satellites. Iridium claims that TUI's application did not quantify the probability that its satellites will collide with particular systems and that there is significant risk of collision with an Iridium satellite as a TUI picosatellite will pass through the Iridium orbit 11 times a day. Further, Iridium states that TUI's orbital debris mitigation proposal is defective as it relies on an operating altitude of 600 km and does not account for the 803 km apogee stated in the application.

Upon review of the applications and the pleadings filed, OET concludes that to permit a fuller exchange on the important issues raised by the above filings, the public interest would be served by classifying the instant proceeding as "permit-but-disclose" for *ex parte* purposes in accordance with Section 1.1200(a) of the Commission's rules and subject to the requirements under Section 1.1206(b) of the rules.

Persons making oral *ex parte* presentations are reminded that memoranda summarizing the presentation must contain a summary of the substance of the presentation and not merely a listing of the subjects discussed. More than a one or two sentence description of the views and arguments presented is generally required. See 47 C.F.R. § 1.1206(b)(2). Other rules pertaining to oral and written presentations are set forth in Section 1.1206(b)(2).

For further information, contact Ira Keltz, Acting Deputy Chief, OET, at (202) 418-0616.

By the Chief, Office of Engineering and Technology